



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 4, 2020

Mr. John A. Heaton, Chairman
Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance
101 N. Halagueno
Carlsbad, NM 88220

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR CONVENING OF PUBLIC MEETING BY VIDEOCONFERENCE
AT PREVIOUS SITES AND REASONABLE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
(HOLTEC INTERNATIONAL'S APPLICATION FOR CONSOLIDATED INTERIM
STORAGE FACILITY LICENSE IN LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO, DOCKET NO.
72-1051)

Dear Mr. Heaton:

I am responding to your letter dated April 8, 2020, requesting that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) establish dates for public hearings to receive comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Holtec International's proposed consolidated interim storage facility, and that these public hearings be focused on the previous five areas of New Mexico where the NRC previously held meetings in 2018. Your letter also requests that the NRC consider convening such meetings via a telecommunications platform, and states that an extension of the public comment period for an additional 60 days is reasonable.

The current 60-day comment period on the draft EIS was scheduled to close on May 22, 2020. Given recent events associated with the COVID-19 public health emergency, and the corresponding actions taken by Federal and State governments to mitigate its spread, the NRC staff has extended the public comment period for an additional 60 days. A notice of this extension was published in the *Federal Register* on April 27, 2020 (85 FR 23382).

The NRC staff plans to hold a nationwide webinar and five public meetings in New Mexico during the public comment period to present the staff's preliminary findings and receive public comments. As the COVID-19 public health emergency evolves, the NRC staff will continue to re-evaluate these plans for engaging the public, and will consider whether additional extensions to the comment period are warranted.

J. Heaton

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If you would like to discuss any of these matters, please contact John McKirgan, Chief of the Storage and Transportation Licensing Branch, at 301-415-5722, or Cinthya Román-Cuevas, Chief of the Environmental Review Materials Branch, at 301-415-7093.

Sincerely,

andrea kock

Andrea L. Kock, Director
Division of Fuel Management
Office of Nuclear Materials
Safety and Safeguards

Docket No.: 72-1051

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DATED: May 4, 2020

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